



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FACT SHEET

**MAYOR SANDERS ENCOURAGES SAN DIEGANS TO
PREPARE FOR DISASTER SURVIVAL**

*Being Prepared To Take Care of Yourself During First 72 Hours
After Disaster Strikes Is Key To Survival*

To highlight the importance of National Preparedness Month, Mayor Jerry Sanders joined with the City's public safety leaders at a press conference today to announce to the public the importance of being prepared to fend for yourself during the first 72 hours after a natural or man-made disaster occurs.

"It's important to remember that when disasters strike, it's usually without warning. During the first 72 hours of a disaster there simply aren't enough resources and emergency personnel available to be mobilized to take care of a city the size and population of San Diego. There are a limited numbers of first responders, and there are limits to what they can do. If you take the time to prepare your home, your car, your workplace and your children's school for the first 72 hours of a disaster, you'll have taken the single most important step to assure your health, well-being, and in some cases, your survival. When unexpected emergencies occur, whether they are naturally occurring or man-made, our greatest individual defense is preparedness."

-- Mayor Jerry Sanders

The Mayor listed getting an emergency supply kit, making an emergency plan, and identifying preparedness and response resources within the community as several things the public can do to prepare themselves for disasters.

- The City of San Diego Department of Homeland Security offers a website that contains disaster preparedness information at: www.sandiego.gov/ohs



San Diego Fire-Rescue Department Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) San Diego

CERT San Diego: Firefighters and Citizens Working Together to Build Safer Communities.

The City of San Diego Fire-Rescue department has learned two valuable lessons from responding to disasters such as wildfires, earthquakes, floods, mudslides and terrorism events: *1) there are never enough public safety resources to get to every neighborhood quickly and 2) citizens want to help.* An innovative new program helps meet this need: ***Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).***

The goal is to help families, neighbors, businesses and communities get through the first few hours or days following a disaster before help arrives. In the first 72 hours after a large-scale disaster, first responders may be overwhelmed, due to the magnitude of the event. The availability of CERT teams, made up of community members trained in basic disaster response, fire safety, light search and rescue, incident command organization and disaster medical operations will help neighborhoods survive.

Tuition-free CERT classes

CERT San Diego is taught by San Diego Fire-Rescue personnel. There is no tuition for these hands-on six- week CERT academies for City of San Diego residents. Students learn how to make their homes and neighborhoods safer, build a disaster kit, learn to combat “the three killers”, how to use fire extinguishers and how to form a team working with the Fire Department in disaster situations. Students attend classes on evenings and weekends. ***CERT San Diego*** trains hundreds of student volunteers each year and is building CERT teams in communities throughout San Diego. CERT volunteers stay active through annual refresher courses and drills, community activities and team building. CERT graduates wear distinctive green vests and hats and carry ID cards identifying them as Disaster Service Workers. CERT volunteers are men and women of all backgrounds that are active in the community – or want to be. CERT teams are easiest to build as part of existing community, business and faith groups, non profit organizations, neighborhood watch or Homeowners Associations.

CERT San Diego 2006 events:

Academy 14 Oct 12 – Nov 18 CERT citizen academy (6 weeks)

For information: www.certsandiego.org (619) 533-3075 Email: cert@sandiego.gov

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Background Information:

- Community volunteerism was inspired by 9/11, which brought us all together.
- CERT San Diego (and all county CERTs) was started after Cedar Fires. They serve a regional need: Prepare our Citizens for Disasters.
- Cutting edge, public/private partnership program of the City – started January 2004
- Taught and managed by San Diego Fire-Rescue Department, it utilizes the experience of firefighters, paramedics and lifeguards combined with citizen volunteers.
- CERT volunteers take care of their communities in the first 72 hours following a disaster when emergency services are overwhelmed.
- Mission Statement: “Firefighters and Citizens Working Together to Build Safer Communities”
- Public/private partnership:
 - Fire-Rescue Department experts (firefighters-lifeguards, paramedics)
 - San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders
 - San Diego City Council
 - Businesses
 - Community groups
 - Citizen Volunteers

CERT San Diego In Its First Two Years:

- Hosted five academies in spring 2006; two more are scheduled in fall 2006 (September: BID Council Business CERT class; Community CERT in October)
- Thanks to support of the Mayor and Council, received City line item funding in FY 07, saving the program after a two-year start-up grant expired.
- Fiscally responsible: partial City funding, partial business and grant funding. Citizen students buy their own disaster kits (class is taught free to City residents).
- Business CERT fees (BERT custom CERT academies) help prepare employees at work and also help support free CERT classes for community. This enables program growth.
- Program is run lean: one staff + part time firefighters + temporary volunteer staff.
- Disaster preparedness message: 100 events and presentations per year (Rotary, Safety Forums, Regional Chamber, Town Councils, Del Mar Fair, street fairs)

Expanding Public Safety Services

- **CERT San Diego graduates:** ***542 in 2 years***
- Largest CERT program in the county, by far
- **CERT San Diego** average: 216 CERT graduates per year -- all other county CERT programs (19 jurisdictions) average 44 CERT grads per year
- **CERT San Diego** built 18 local CERT teams to help support neighborhood preparedness and safety, at least one in each of eight City Council districts
- **CERT San Diego** mobilizes and manages 20,000+ volunteer hours per year
- First six months of 2006: graduated as many people as 2004 + 2005 *combined*
- **CERT San Diego** recruited and trained the region’s first paid BERT Business academies (two Qualcomm academies this spring, one BID Council academy this fall) to help activate the business community into CERT preparedness
- **CERT San Diego** hosted the first regional CERT drills for county CERT programs

Preparing Your Family For An Emergency

When preparing for an emergency, plan on having enough supplies to get you and your family through at least the first 72 hours. After a major emergency, there's a good chance that traditional emergency response teams will be too busy to take care of you and your family. You need to prepare your home and neighborhood.

The Plan

- ☐ Stock up on at least a three-day supply of food, water, clothes, medical supplies and other necessary equipment for everyone in your family. Make sure everyone knows where to find them. (See the information sheet on emergency supplies.)
- ☐ Decide where and when to reunite your family should you be apart when a disaster strikes.
- ☐ Choose a person outside the immediate area to contact if family members are separated. Long distance phone service will probably be restored sooner than local service. Do not use the phone immediately after a major emergency.
- ☐ Know the policies of the school or daycare center your children attend. Make plans to have someone pick them up if you are unable to get to them.
- ☐ If you have a family member who does not speak English, prepare an emergency card written in English indicating that person's identification, address and any special needs such as medication or allergies. Tell that person to keep the card with him/her at all times.
- ☐ Conduct Earthquake: Duck, Cover & Hold drills every six months with your family.
- ☐ Practice Stop, Drop and Roll drills for fire, as well as emergency exit drills in the house (EDITH) regularly.
- ☐ Know the safest place in each room because it will be difficult to move from one room to another during an earthquake or explosion.
- ☐ Locate the shutoff valves for water, gas and electricity. Learn how to shut off the valves before an emergency. If you have any questions, call your utility company. Remember not to shut off utility valves unless directed to do so by your utility company.

- ☐ Make copies of vital records and keep them in a safe deposit box in another city or state. Make sure your originals are stored safely.
- ☐ Before a major emergency occurs, call your local Red Cross chapter and Office of Emergency Services to find out about their plans for emergency shelters and temporary medical centers in case of a disaster.
- ☐ Establish all the possible ways to exit your house. Keep those areas clear.
- ☐ Know the locations of the nearest fire and police stations.
- ☐ Take photos and/or videos of your valuables. Make copies and keep them with a friend or relative in another city or state.
- ☐ Include your babysitter and other household help in your plans.
- ☐ Keep an extra pair of eyeglasses and house and car keys on hand.
- ☐ Keep extra cash and change. If electricity is out, you will not be able to use an ATM.

General Tips

- Stay away from heavy furniture, appliances, large glass panes, shelves holding objects, and large decorative masonry, brick or plaster such as fireplaces.
- Keep your hallway clear. It is usually one of the safest places to be during an earthquake or explosion.
- Stay away from kitchens and garages, which tend to be the most dangerous places because of the many items kept there.

**Be Smart
Be Prepared
Be Responsible**

Emergency Supplies Checklist

Can You Go It Alone for Three Days?

Essentials

- ☐ Water — One gallon per person per day (a week's supply of water is preferable)
- ☐ Water purification kit
- ☐ First aid kit, freshly stocked
- ☐ First aid book
- ☐ Food
- ☐ Can opener (non-electric)
- ☐ Blankets or sleeping bags
- ☐ Portable radio, flashlight and spare batteries
- ☐ Essential medications
- ☐ Extra pair of eyeglasses
- ☐ Extra pair of house and car keys
- ☐ Fire extinguisher — A-B-C type
- ☐ Food, water and restraint (leash or carrier) for pets
- ☐ Cash and change
- ☐ Baby supplies: formula, bottle, pacifier, soap and baby powder, clothing, blankets, baby wipes, disposable diapers, canned food and juices.

Sanitation Supplies

- ☐ Large plastic trash bags for waste; tarps and rain ponchos
- ☐ Large trash cans
- ☐ Bar soap and liquid detergent
- ☐ Shampoo
- ☐ Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- ☐ Feminine hygiene supplies
- ☐ Toilet paper
- ☐ Household bleach

The first 72 hours after a major emergency or disaster are critical. Electricity, gas, water, and telephones may not be working. In addition, public safety services such as police and fire departments will be busy handling serious crises. You should be prepared to be self-sufficient — able to live without running water, electricity and/or gas, and telephones — for at least three days following a major emergency. To do so, keep on hand in a central location the following.

Safety and Comfort

- ☐ Sturdy shoes
- ☐ Heavy gloves for clearing debris
- ☐ Candles and matches
- ☐ Light sticks
- ☐ Change of clothing
- ☐ Knife or razor blades
- ☐ Garden hose for siphoning and firefighting
- ☐ Tent
- ☐ Communication kit: paper, pens, stamps

Cooking

- ☐ Plastic knives, forks, spoons
- ☐ Paper plates and cups
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Heavy-duty aluminum foil
- ☐ Camping stove for outdoor cooking (caution: before using fire to cook, make sure there are no gas leaks; never use charcoal indoors)

Tools and Supplies

- ☐ Axe, shovel, broom
- ☐ Adjustable wrench for turning off gas
- ☐ Tool kit including a screwdriver, pliers and a hammer
- ☐ Coil of ½ " rope
- ☐ Plastic tape, staple gun and sheeting for window replacement
- ☐ Bicycle
- ☐ City map

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